



US006275B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Boe et al.

(10) Patent No.: **US 6,236,975 B1**
(45) Date of Patent: **May 22, 2001**

(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROFILING CUSTOMERS FOR TARGETED MARKETING**

(75) Inventors: **Barbara J. Boe, Frisco; Julia M. Hamrick; Marjorie L. Aarant**, both of Dallas, all of TX (US)

(73) Assignee: **Ignite Sales, Inc., Dallas, TX (US)**

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **09/162,825**

(22) Filed: **Sep. 29, 1998**

(51) Int. Cl.⁷ **G06F 17/60**

(52) U.S. Cl. **705/7; 705/10; 705/14; 705/26; 705/27**

(58) Field of Search **705/10, 14, 28, 705/26, 27, 35, 36, 7; 235/493, 380, 449, 475; 902/27; 386/117, 46; 709/206, 217**

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

5,041,972 * 8/1991 Frost 364/401
5,956,691 * 9/1999 Powers 705/4
5,974,398 * 10/1999 Hanson et al. 705/14

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

0139313 * 8/1983 (EP) .

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Multimedia & Videodisc Monitor, Edge of Chaos, PP 1-4, Apr. 1995.*

Scott e. Sampson, Decision Sciences, Ramifications of Monitoring Service Quality Through passively Solicited Customer Feedback, PP 601-605, Sep. 1996.*

Leslie Marable, Marketing and Commerce, PP 1-2, Mar. 1997.*

Groupware users, Business Computing Brief, PP 1-2, Apr. 1995.*

"A New Weapon For Competitive Advantage," SQ software quarterly, reprinted from SQ magazine, vol. 2, No. 4, 1995.

"Why Firefly Has Mad Ave. Buzzing," Paul C. Judge, Business Week, 2 pgs, Oct. 7, 1996.

"Tuning in to Marimba," Jesse Freund, Wired, 2 pgs, Nov. 1996.

"In Webmorial," Fred Hapgood, Wired, 3 pgs, Nov. 1996.

"The Promise of One," Wired, 8 pgs, May 1998.

"Web Can Help Answer Finance Queries," Matt Krantz, Investor's Business Daily, Jan. 17, 1998.

"IBM Intelligent Agents," Don Gilbert, Peter Janca, 7 pgs, Jan. 17, 1997.

"The Role of Intelligent Agents in the Informa . . .," IBM Corporation, 12 pgs, 1995.

"Collaborative Filters," Jerry Michalski, Release 1.0, Nov. 1996.

I Want, David Kline, Wired 3.01, 3 pgs, Undated.

"Agent of Change," Scott Berkun, Wired 3.04, 3 pgs, Undated.

.(List continued on next page.)

Primary Examiner—James P. Trammell

Assistant Examiner—Mussie Tesfamariam

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Baker Botts L.L.P.

(57)

ABSTRACT

A targeted marketing system and method are provided that provide a customer with customer questions, receive responses to the customer questions from the customer, and store data associated with the responses. The customer is provided with a feedback page that graphically illustrates data associated with the customer's standing in a selected peer group. The customer is provided with options operable to adjust the customer's actual demographic to a hypothetical demographic, and data associated with hypothetical demographic changes from the customer is received and processed. Hypothetical feedback information is then displayed that graphically illustrates the hypothetical standing of the customer within the selected peer group such that the customer can see the effect of the hypothetical demographic changes.

28 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets

